

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
18 March 2004 (18.03.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/023524 A3

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: G06F 17/60

573-0071 (JP). MINAMI, Masataka [JP/US]; 55 East Camino Real Ave., Arcadia, CA 91006 (US). YAMAMOTO, Masaya [JP/JP]; 7-41, Higashimakino-cho, Hirakata-shi, Osaka-fu 573-1151 (JP).

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2003/027719

(22) International Filing Date:
5 September 2003 (05.09.2003)

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(25) Filing Language: English

(81) Designated States (national): JP, US.

(26) Publication Language: English

Published:

(30) Priority Data:
10/234,093 5 September 2002 (05.09.2002) US

- with international search report
- before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

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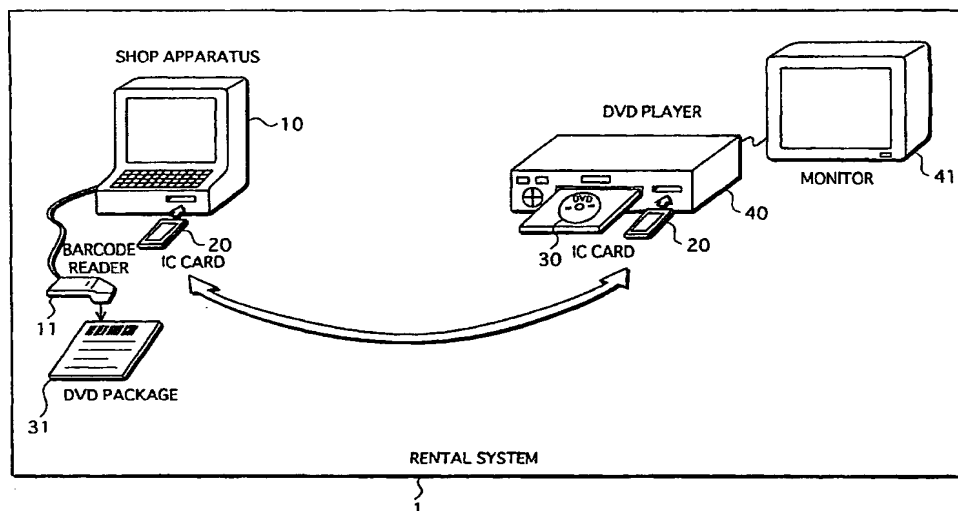
(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
8 July 2004

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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: STORAGE MEDIUM RENTAL SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A storage-medium rental system includes a portable storage medium to be rented to the user, a portable semiconductor memory owned by the user, a rental-shop apparatus owned by the rental agent, and a playback apparatus owned by the user. The storage medium prestores encrypted content generated by encrypting digital work using a content encryption key. The semiconductor memory has an area for securely storing a content decryption key. The rental-shop apparatus stores a content decryption key for decrypting the encrypted content. The rental-shop apparatus writes the content decryption key to the semiconductor memory. The playback apparatus securely reads the content decryption key from the semiconductor memory, reads the encrypted content from the storage medium, decrypts the encrypted content using the content decryption key, and plays back the decrypted content.